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PARIS FOR WILLIAM JORDAN

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TAGS: PREL PGOV PHUM PREF PBTS UNSC MO WI

SUBJECT: UN WESTERN SAHARA REPORT WILL INCLUDE ENVOY'S VIEWS

REF: STATE 33088

Classified By: Deputy political counselor Molly Phee  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: The UN has confirmed that the Secretary-General's upcoming report on the Western Sahara

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will include a realistic assessment of the state of play by Personal Envoy Peter Van Walsum, including his determination that neither a referendum with independence as an option nor autonomy based exclusively on the Moroccan proposal is currently politically realistic. The Secretary-General, however, will not endorse Van Walsum's view as his own at this stage. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Donatella Giubilaro, the Western Sahara action officer in the UN's Department of Political Affairs, told USUN April 2 that Van Walsum had completed his written analysis of the status of Western Sahara negotiations and submitted the text to the UN for inclusion in the Secretary-General's next report on the Western Sahara,

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scheduled to be released April 14. (The other portion of the text, pertaining to MINURSO, is prepared by the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations and is also complete.) Giubilaro confirmed that the draft report must now be approved by the Secretary-General's office. She also reported that Van Walsum's analysis makes clear his bald view that neither a referendum with independence as an option nor autonomy based exclusively on the Moroccan proposal is currently politically realistic.

¶3. (C) Per reftel, Ambassador Wolff met with DPA U/SYG Lynn Pascoe April 4 to urge support for Van Walsum's text. Pascoe assured Amb Wolff that Van Walsum's proposed text would not be changed. He also reported that Van Walsum's analysis is critical of the Security Council for its role in perpetuating the stalemate. In response to Amb Wolff's push to have the Secretary-General endorse Van Walsum's report, Pascoe made

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clear that the Secretary-General would not adopt Van Walsum's view as his own. The text of the report is likely to urge the parties and concerned states to seriously consider Van Walsum's assessment.

¶4. (C) Separately, USUN met with DPA Director for Africa Sammy Kum Buo, who expressed sympathy for Van Walsum's conclusion and a desire to break the stalemate. But Buo argued that it would be imprudent for Ban to endorse Van Walsum's views now. He explained that all the parties -- Morocco, the Polisario, and Algeria -- refuse to compromise on their stated positions and therefore oppose Van Walsum's conclusion. Buo said he had already been lobbied by the parties and expected them to lobby the Secretary-General. He also said Ban would be criticized by the NAM and states like South Africa if he appeared to undermine the principle of self-determination. Buo, who works closely with the NAM through his work on Africa, said "these are my people and I tell you they will give the SG a hard time." Finally, Buo recalled that the Security Council remains deadlocked. He concluded that Ban is too new in his job to adopt such a controversial position, but did not rule out an evolution in the Secretary-General's approach in the future.

KHALILZAD